DRAGON AGE™

What has come before

Born to a mage mother and a templar father, Gleam is the child of a forbidden love. Now, seventeen years later, Gleam's adopted family has been murdered, leaving Gleam alone and penniless with her young brother and cousin. The dwarves want her for her magic, but Gleam only wants revenge.

ORSON SCOTT CARD with AARON JOHNSTON, writers
MARK ROBINSON (p. 1-12) and ANTHONY J. TAN (p. 13-22), pencillers
JASON P. MARTIN (p. 1-12) and ANTHONY J. TAN (p. 13-22), inkers
MOSSA ANDRES JOSE, colorist
RICHARD STARKINGS and
COMICRAFT'S ALBERT DESCHESNE, lettering
HUMBERTO RAMOS, cover art
EDGAR DELGADO, cover color

FOR EA COMICS:
Robert Simpson, Editor-in-Chief

FOR BIOWARE:
Mike Laidlaw, Creative Director
Mark Darrah, Executive Producer
Matthew Goldman, Art Director
David S. Silverman, Senior Product Manager
Aaryn Flynn, Studio GM, BioWare Edmonton
Ray Muzyka and Greg Zeschuk, BioWare Co-Founders
Richard Iwaniuk, Director of Business Development

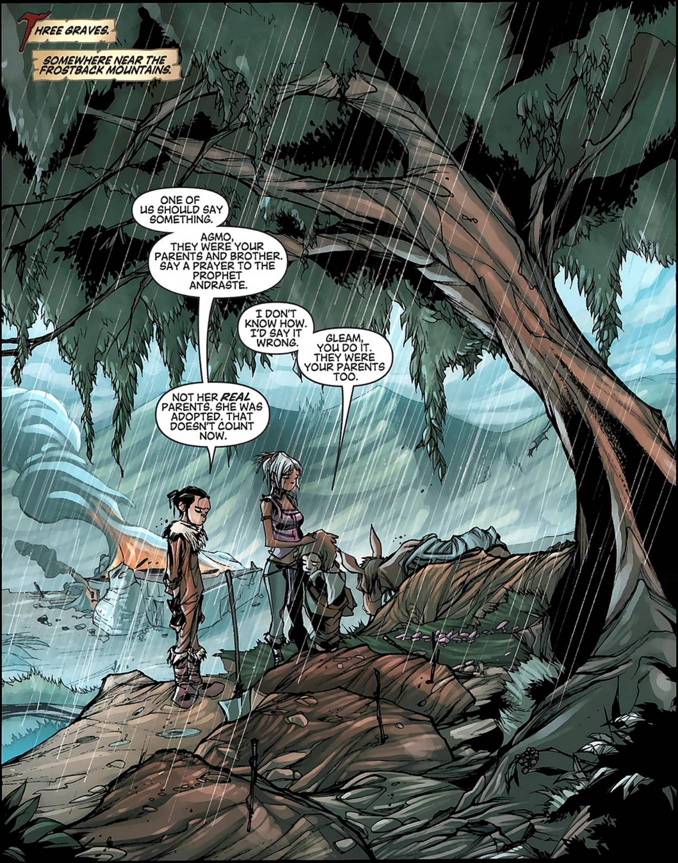
dragonage.bioware.com
www.eacomics.com
www.idwpublishing.com

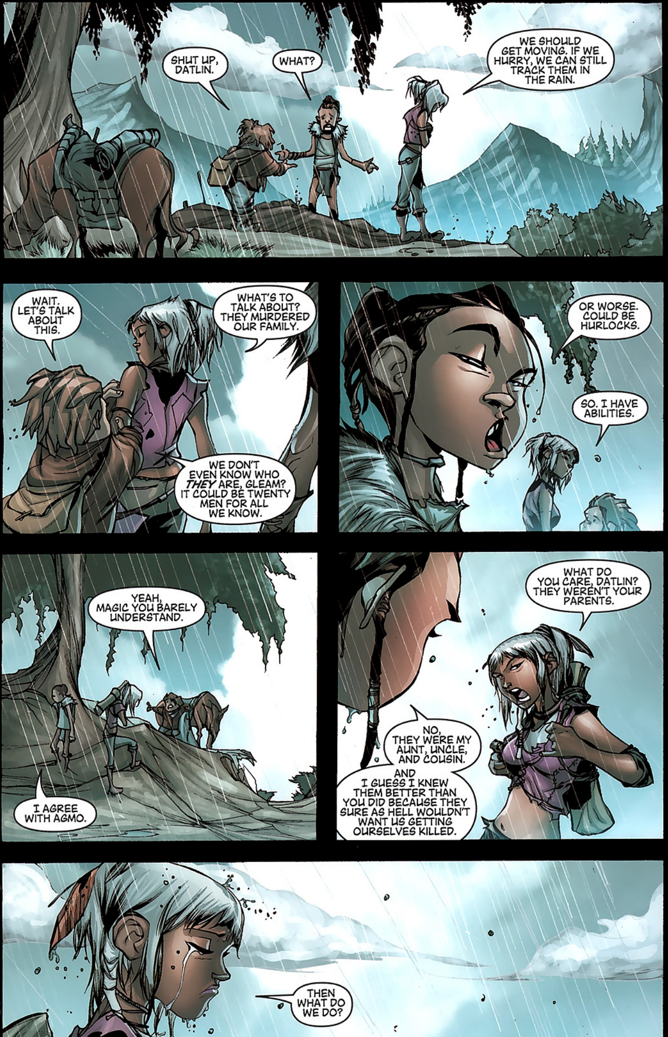
DRAGON AGE #3. JULY 2010. An EA Comics Production, published and distributed by IDW Publishing, a division of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Editorial offices: 5080 Santa Fe St., San Diego, CA 92109. Contents © and ™ Electronic Arts Inc. and are used with permission. All rights reserved. Any similarities to persons living or dead are purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this publication may be reprinted without the permission of Idea and Design Works, LLC. Printed in Korea. IDW Publishing does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork. FIRST PRINTING.

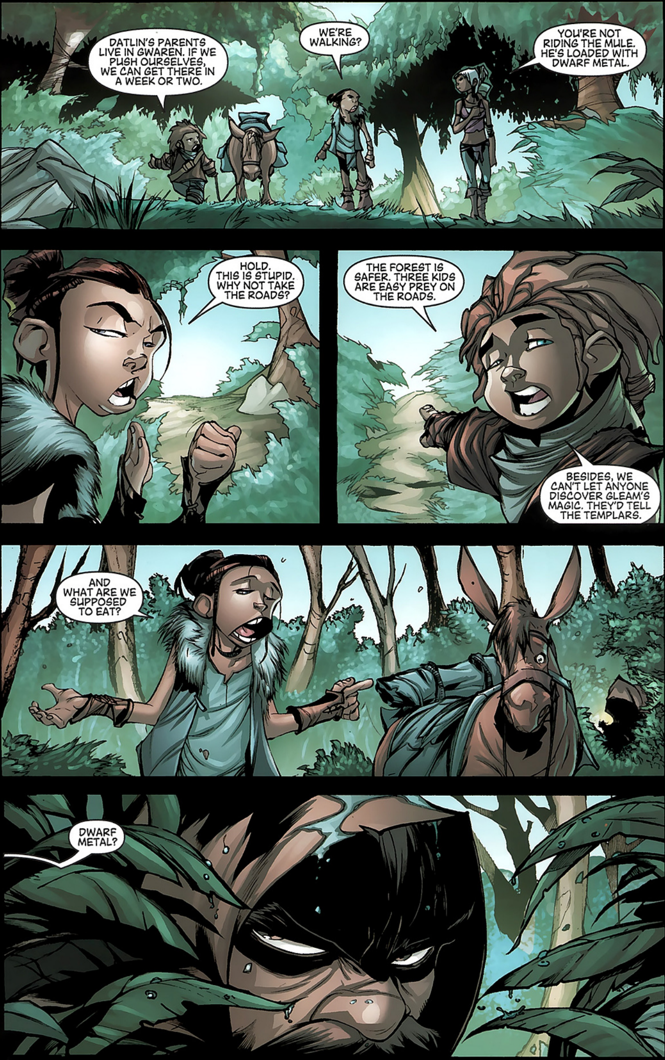
IDW Publishing
Operations:
Ted Adams, Chief Executive Officer
Greg Goldstein, Chief Operating Officer
Matthew Ruzicka, CPA, Chief Financial Officer
Alan Payne, VP of Sales
Lorelei Bunjes, Dir. of Digital Services
AnnaMaria White, Marketing & PR Manager
Marci Hubbard, Executive Assistant
Alonzo Simon, Shipping Manager
Angela Loggins, Staff Accountant
Cherrie Go, Assistant Web Designer

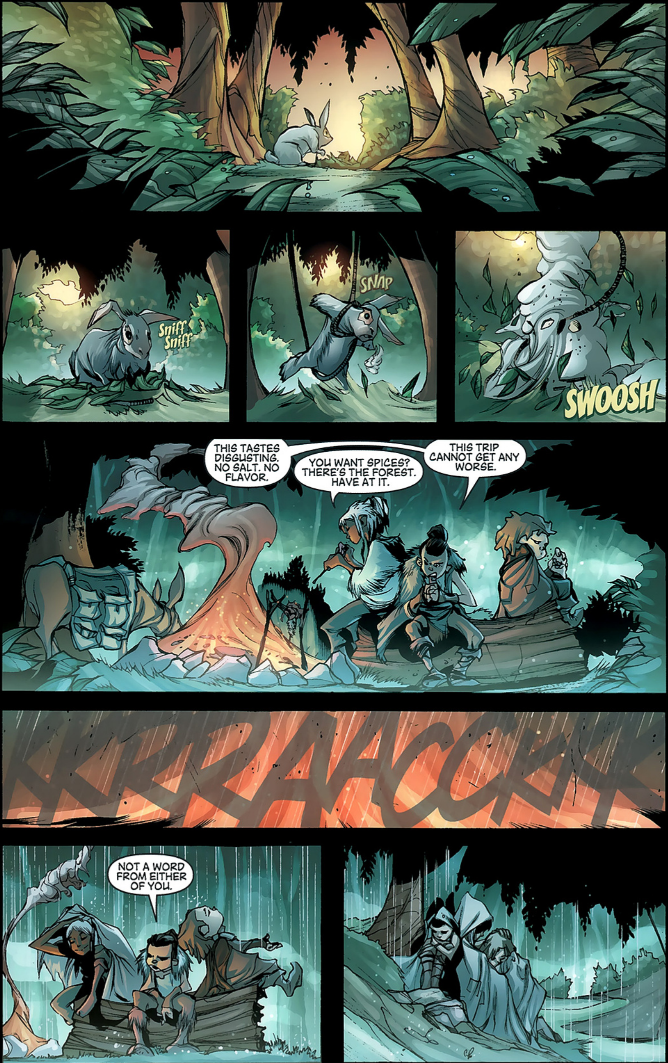
Editorial:
Chris Ryall, Publisher/Editor-in-Chief
Scott Dunbier, Editor, Special Projects
Andy Schmidt, Senior Editor
Bob Schreck, Senior Editor
Justin Eisinger, Editor
Kris Oprisko, Editor/Foreign Lic.
Denton J. Tipton, Editor
Tom Waltz, Editor
Mariah Huehner, Associate Editor
Carlos Guzman, Editorial Assistant

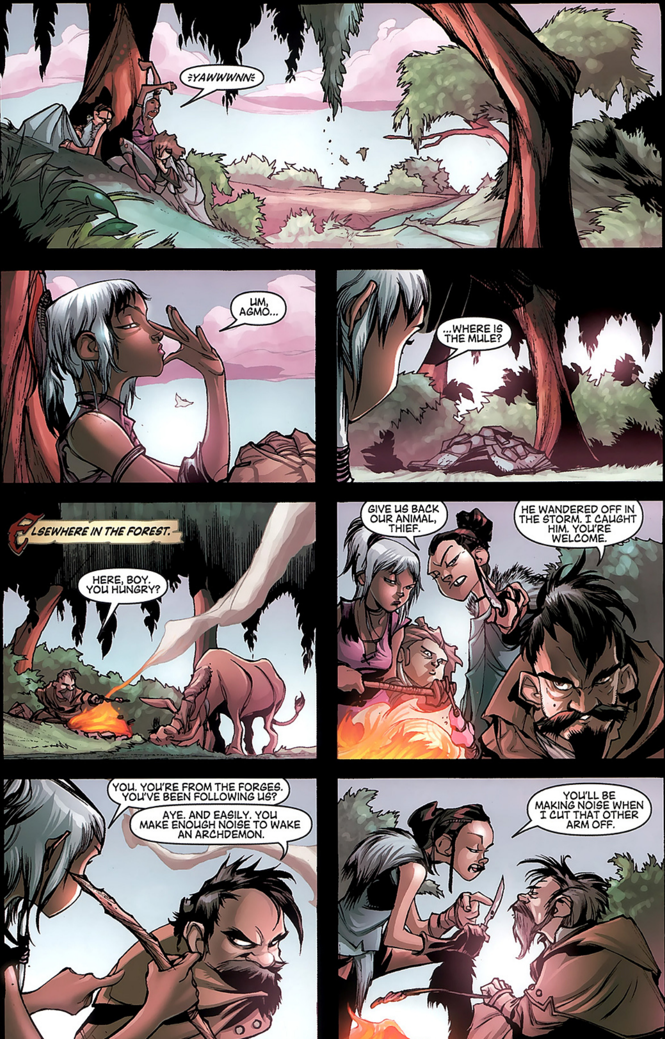
Design:
Robbie Robbins, EVP/Sr. Graphic Artist
Neil Uyetake, Art Director
Chris Mowry, Graphic Artist
Amauri Osorio, Graphic Artist
Gilberto Lazcano, Production Assistant
Shawn Lee, Production Assistant

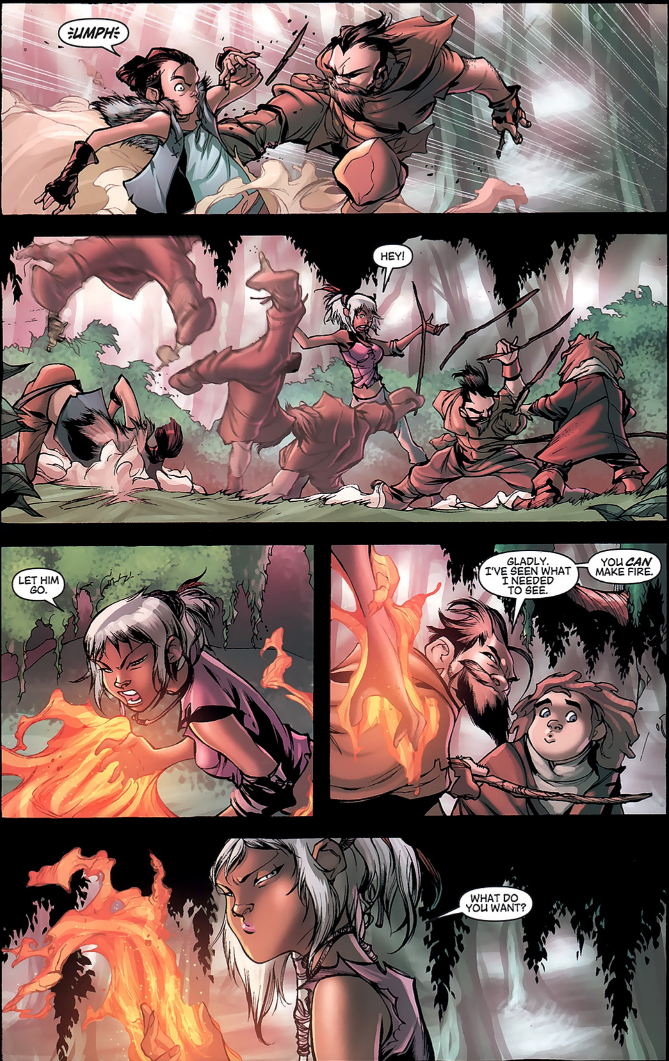

THREE GRAVES.
SOMEWHERE NEAR THE FROSTBACK MOUNTAINS.
ONE OF US SHOULD SAY SOMETHING.
AGMO, THEY WERE YOUR PARENTS AND BROTHER. SAY A PRAYER TO THE PROPHET ANDRASTE.
I DON'T KNOW HOW. I'D SAY IT WRONG.
GLEAM, YOU DO IT. THEY WERE YOUR PARENTS TOO.
NOT HER *REAL* PARENTS. SHE WAS ADOPTED. THAT DOESN'T COUNT NOW.

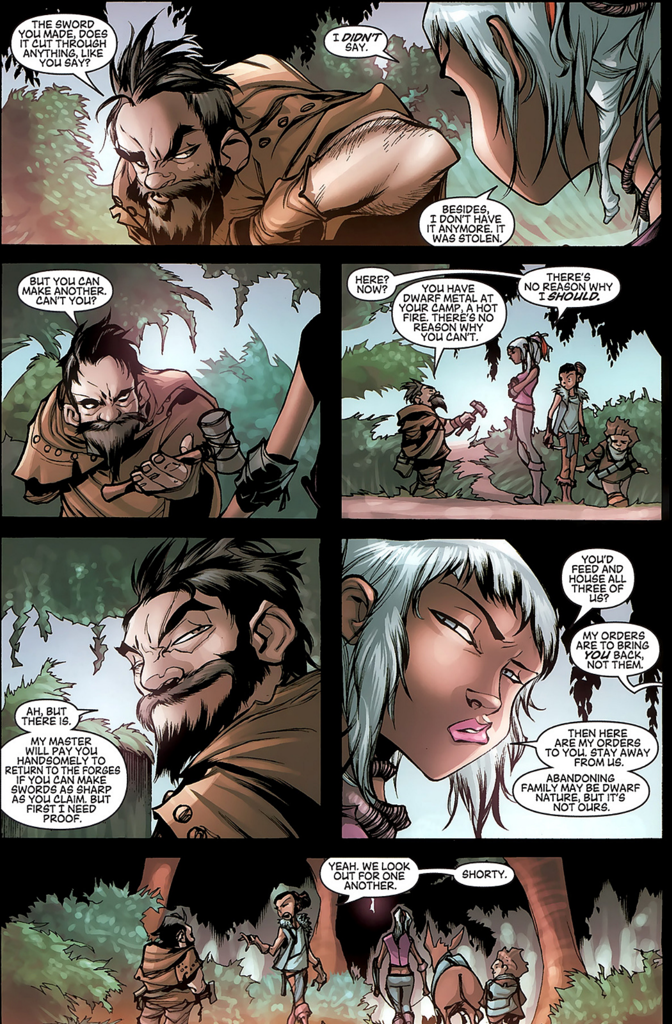

SHUT UP, DATLIN.
WHAT?
WE SHOULD GET MOVING. IF WE HURRY, WE CAN STILL TRACK THEM IN THE RAIN.
WAIT. LET'S TALK ABOUT THIS.
WHAT'S TO TALK ABOUT? THEY MURDERED OUR FAMILY.
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHO *THEY* ARE, GLEAM? IT COULD BE TWENTY MEN FOR ALL WE KNOW.
OR WORSE. COULD BE HURLOCKS.
SO. I HAVE ABILITIES.
YEAH, MAGIC YOU BARELY UNDERSTAND.
I AGREE WITH AGMO.
WHAT DO YOU CARE, DATLIN? THEY WEREN'T YOUR PARENTS.
NO, THEY WERE MY AUNT, UNCLE, AND COUSIN.
AND I GUESS I KNEW THEM BETTER THAN YOU DID BECAUSE THEY SURE AS HELL WOULDN'T WANT US GETTING OURSELVES KILLED.
THEN WHAT DO WE DO?

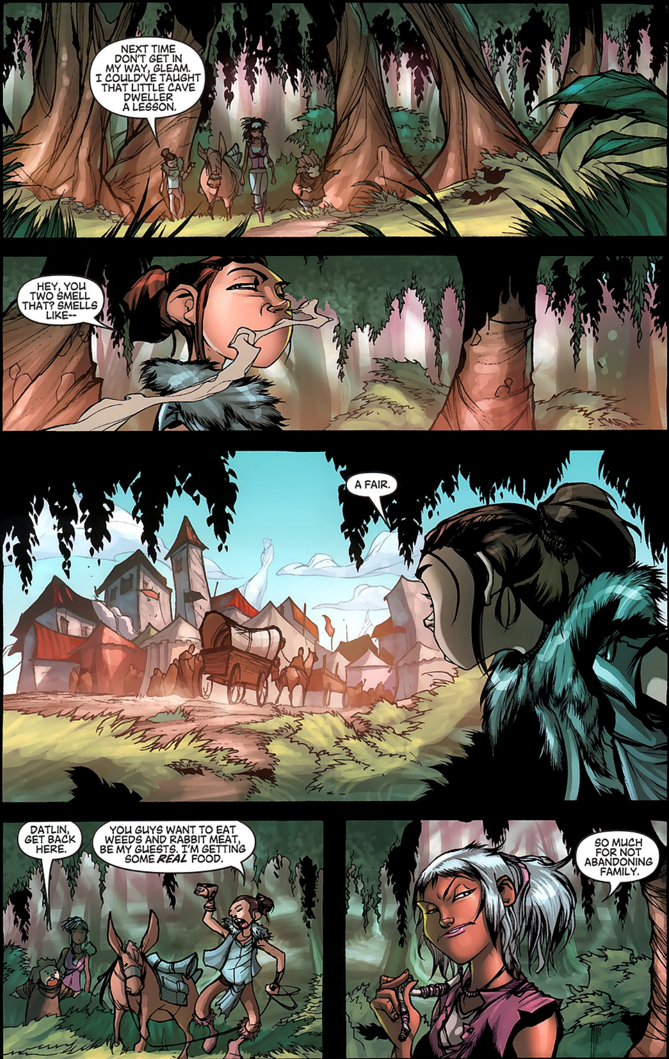

DATLIN'S PARENTS LIVE IN GWAREN. IF WE PUSH OURSELVES, WE CAN GET THERE IN A WEEK OR TWO.
WE'RE WALKING?
YOU'RE NOT RIDING THE MULE. HE'S LOADED WITH DWARF METAL.
HOLD. THIS IS STUPID. WHY NOT TAKE THE ROADS?
THE FOREST IS SAFER. THREE KIDS ARE EASY PREY ON THE ROADS.
BESIDES, WE CAN'T LET ANYONE DISCOVER GLEAM'S MAGIC. THEY'D TELL THE TEMPLARS.
AND WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO EAT?
DWARF METAL?

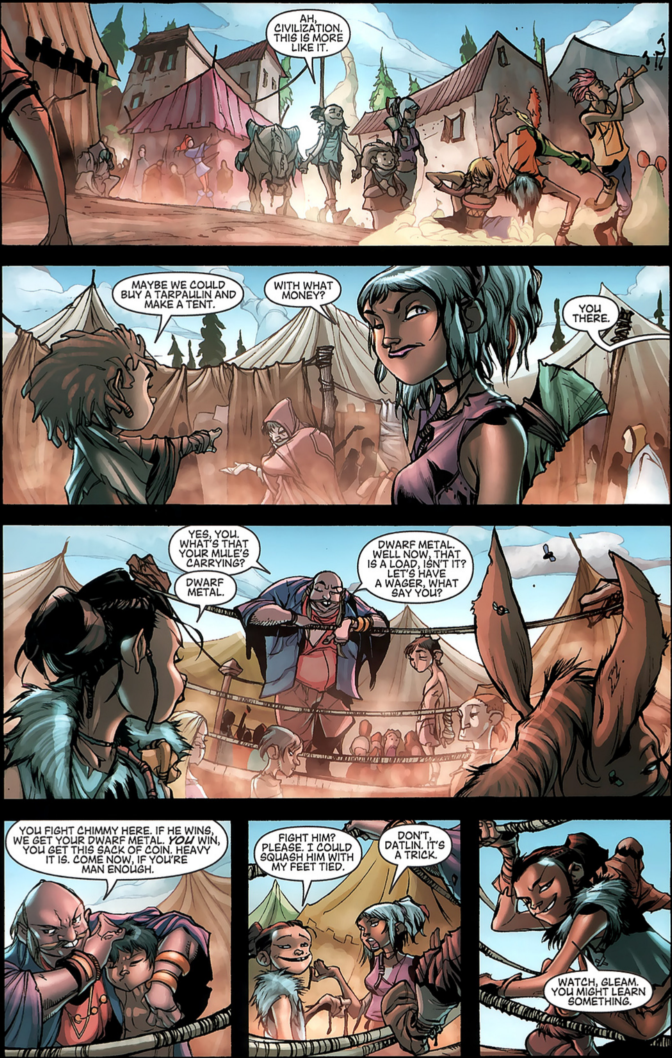

Sniff Sniff
SNAP
SWOOSH
THIS TASTES DISGUSTING. NO SALT. NO FLAVOR.
YOU WANT SPICES? THERE'S THE FOREST. HAVE AT IT.
THIS TRIP CANNOT GET ANY WORSE.
KRRRAACCKK
NOT A WORD FROM EITHER OF YOU.

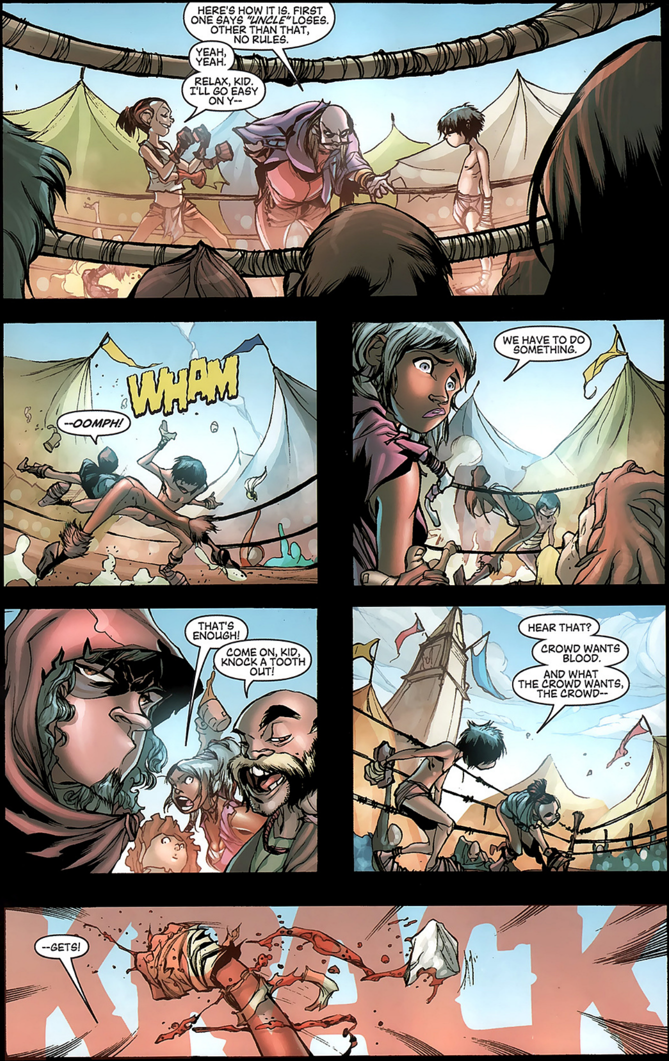

YAWWWNN
UM, AGMO...
...WHERE IS THE MULE?
ELSEWHERE IN THE FOREST.
HERE, BOY. YOU HUNGRY?
GIVE US BACK OUR ANIMAL, THIEF.
HE WANDERED OFF IN THE STORM. I CAUGHT HIM. YOU'RE WELCOME.
YOU. YOU'RE FROM THE FORGES. YOU'VE BEEN FOLLOWING US?
AYE. AND EASILY. YOU MAKE ENOUGH NOISE TO WAKE AN ARCHDEMON.
YOU'LL BE MAKING NOISE WHEN I CUT THAT OTHER ARM OFF.

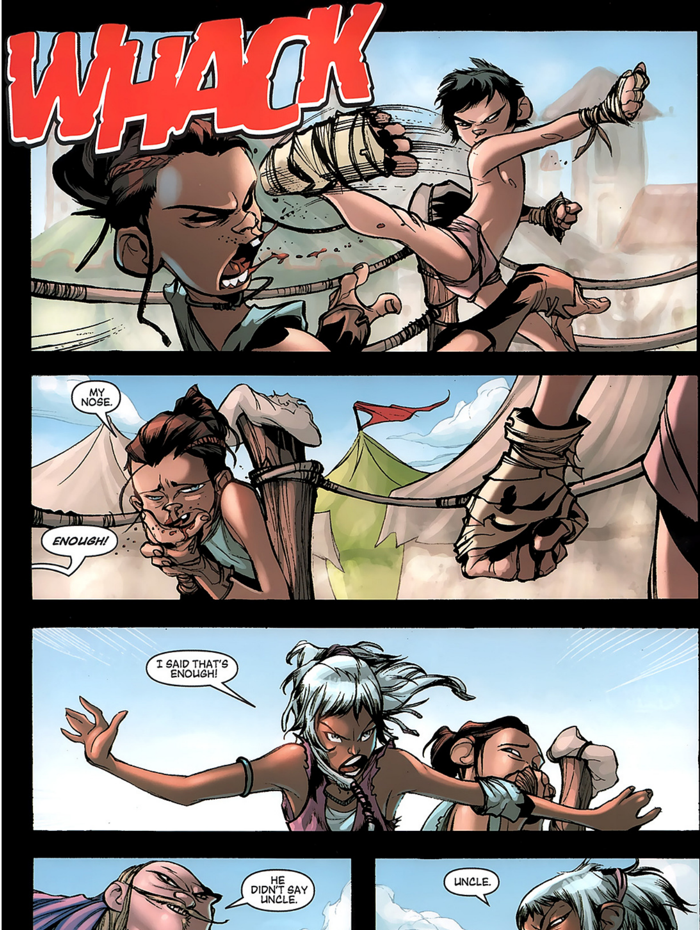

UMPH
HEY!
LET HIM GO.
GLADLY. I'VE SEEN WHAT I NEEDED TO SEE.
YOU *CAN* MAKE FIRE.
WHAT DO YOU WANT?

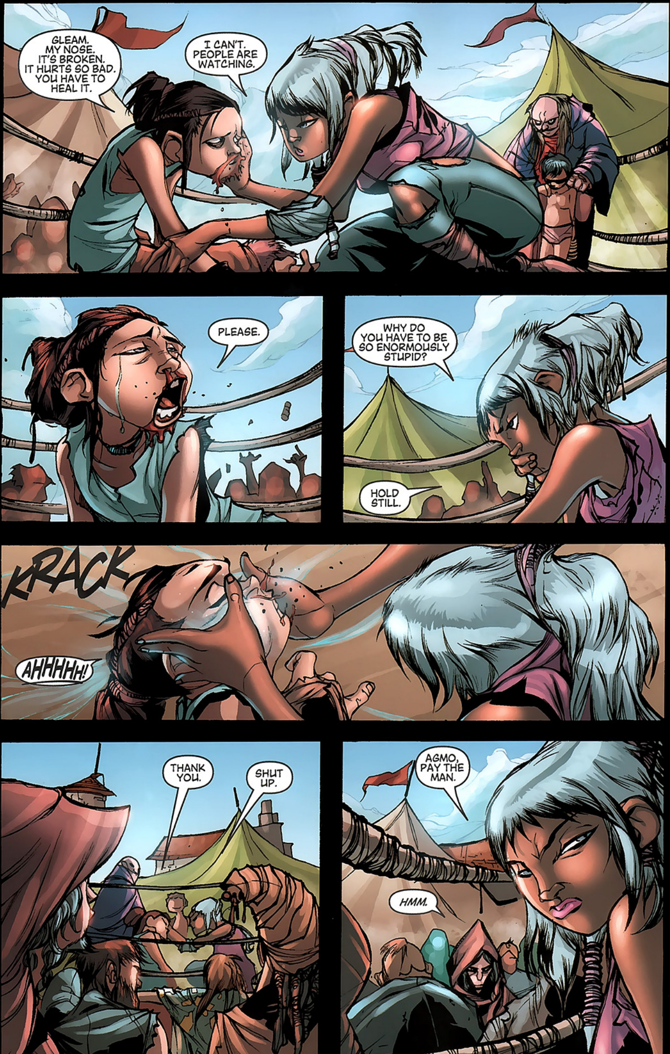

THE SWORD YOU MADE, DOES IT CUT THROUGH ANYTHING, LIKE YOU SAY?
I *DIDN'T* SAY.
BESIDES, I DON'T HAVE IT ANYMORE. IT WAS STOLEN.
BUT YOU CAN MAKE ANOTHER. CAN'T YOU?
HERE? NOW?
YOU HAVE DWARF METAL AT YOUR CAMP, A HOT FIRE. THERE'S NO REASON WHY YOU CAN'T.
THERE'S NO REASON WHY I *SHOULD.*
AH, BUT THERE IS.
MY MASTER WILL PAY YOU HANDSOMELY TO RETURN TO THE FORGES IF YOU CAN MAKE SWORDS AS SHARP AS YOU CLAIM. BUT FIRST I NEED PROOF.
YOU'D FEED AND HOUSE ALL THREE OF US?
MY ORDERS ARE TO BRING *YOU* BACK, NOT THEM.
THEN HERE ARE MY ORDERS TO YOU. STAY AWAY FROM US.
ABANDONING FAMILY MAY BE DWARF NATURE, BUT IT'S NOT OURS.
YEAH. WE LOOK OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER.
SHORTY.

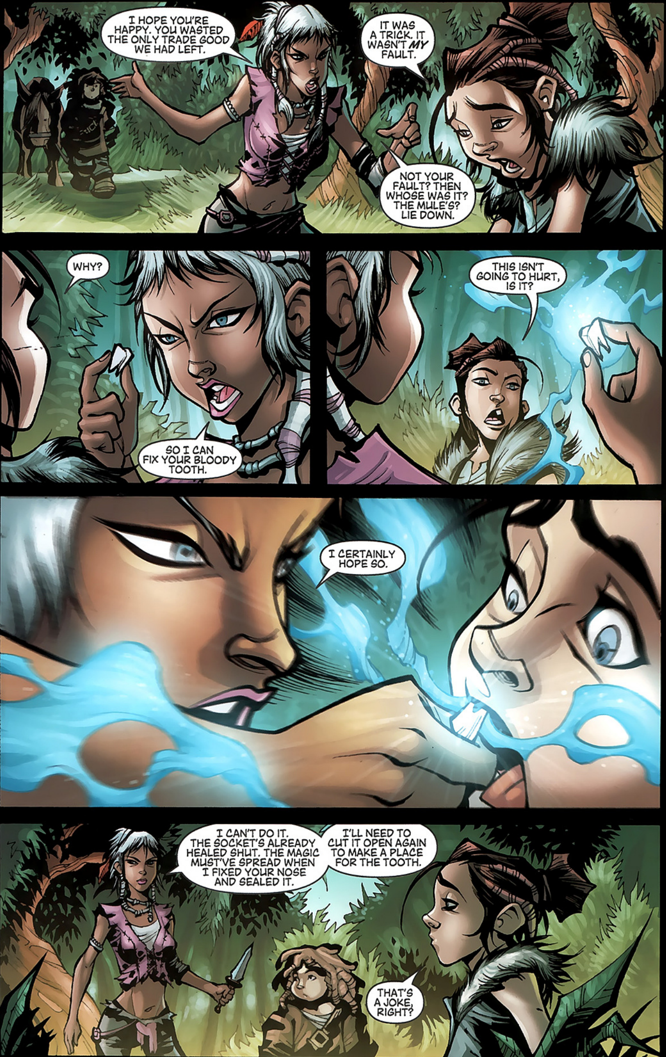

NEXT TIME DON'T GET IN MY WAY, GLEAM. I COULD'VE TAUGHT THAT LITTLE CAVE DWELLER A LESSON.
HEY, YOU TWO SMELL THAT? SMELLS LIKE--
A FAIR.
DATLIN, GET BACK HERE.
YOU GUYS WANT TO EAT WEEDS AND RABBIT MEAT, BE MY GUESTS. I'M GETTING SOME *REAL* FOOD.
SO MUCH FOR NOT ABANDONING FAMILY.

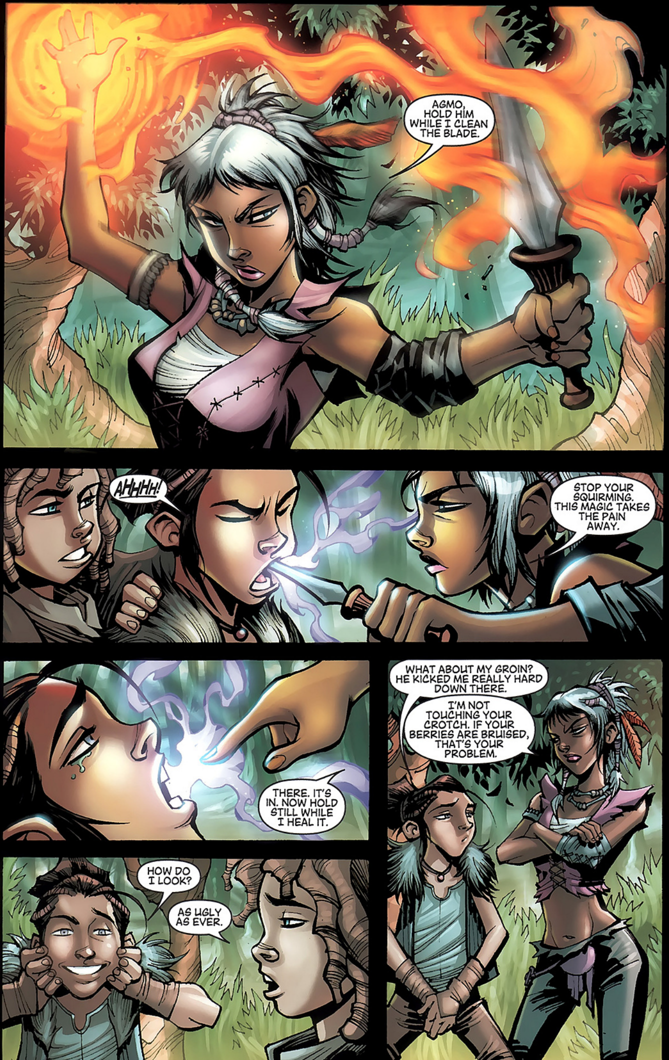

AH, CIVILIZATION. THIS IS MORE LIKE IT.
MAYBE WE COULD BUY A TARPAULIN AND MAKE A TENT.
WITH WHAT MONEY?
YOU THERE.
YES, YOU. WHAT'S THAT YOUR MULE'S CARRYING?
DWARF METAL.
DWARF METAL. WELL NOW, THAT IS A LOAD, ISN'T IT? LET'S HAVE A WAGER, WHAT SAY YOU?
YOU FIGHT CHIMMY HERE. IF HE WINS, WE GET YOUR DWARF METAL. *YOU* WIN, YOU GET THIS SACK OF COIN. HEAVY IT IS. COME NOW, IF YOU'RE MAN ENOUGH.
FIGHT HIM? PLEASE. I COULD SQUASH HIM WITH MY FEET TIED.
DON'T, DATLIN. IT'S A TRICK.
WATCH, GLEAM. YOU MIGHT LEARN SOMETHING.

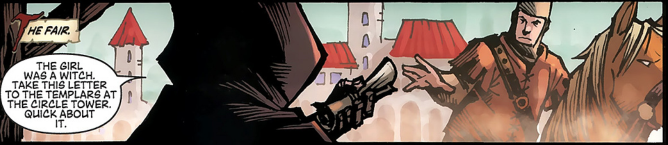

HERE'S HOW IT IS. FIRST ONE SAYS *"UNCLE"* LOSES. OTHER THAN THAT, NO RULES.
YEAH, YEAH.
RELAX, KID. I'LL GO EASY ON Y--
WHAM
--*OOMPH!*
WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING.
THAT'S ENOUGH!
COME ON, KID, KNOCK A TOOTH OUT!
HEAR THAT?
CROWD WANTS BLOOD.
AND WHAT THE CROWD WANTS, THE CROWD--
--GETS!
KRACK

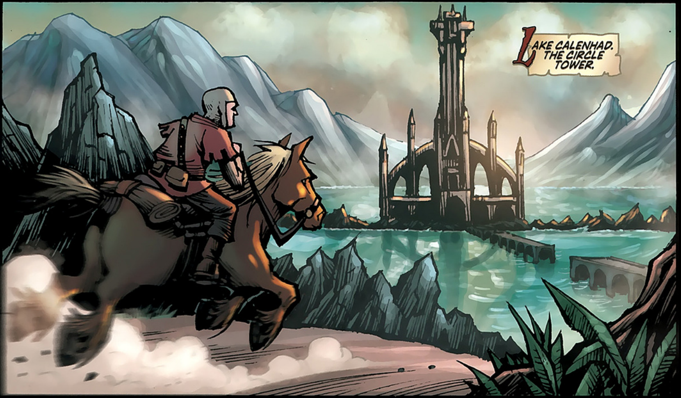

WHACK
MY NOSE.
ENOUGH!
I SAID THAT'S ENOUGH!
HE DIDN'T SAY UNCLE.
UNCLE.

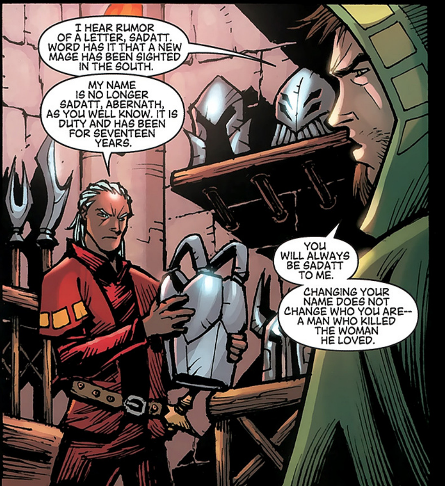

GLEAM. MY NOSE. IT'S BROKEN. IT HURTS SO BAD. YOU HAVE TO HEAL IT.
I CAN'T. PEOPLE ARE WATCHING.
PLEASE.
WHY DO YOU HAVE TO BE SO ENORMOUSLY STUPID?
HOLD STILL.
KRACK
AHHHHH!
THANK YOU.
SHUT UP.
AGMO, PAY THE MAN.
HMM.

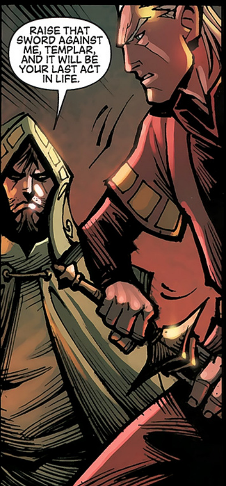

I HOPE YOU'RE HAPPY. YOU WASTED THE ONLY TRADE GOOD WE HAD LEFT.
IT WAS A TRICK. IT WASN'T *MY* FAULT.
NOT YOUR FAULT? THEN WHOSE WAS IT? THE MULE'S? LIE DOWN.
WHY?
SO I CAN FIX YOUR BLOODY TOOTH.
THIS ISN'T GOING TO HURT, IS IT?
I CERTAINLY HOPE SO.
I CAN'T DO IT. THE SOCKET'S ALREADY HEALED SHUT. THE MAGIC MUST'VE SPREAD WHEN I FIXED YOUR NOSE AND SEALED IT.
I'LL NEED TO CUT IT OPEN AGAIN TO MAKE A PLACE FOR THE TOOTH.
THAT'S A JOKE, RIGHT?

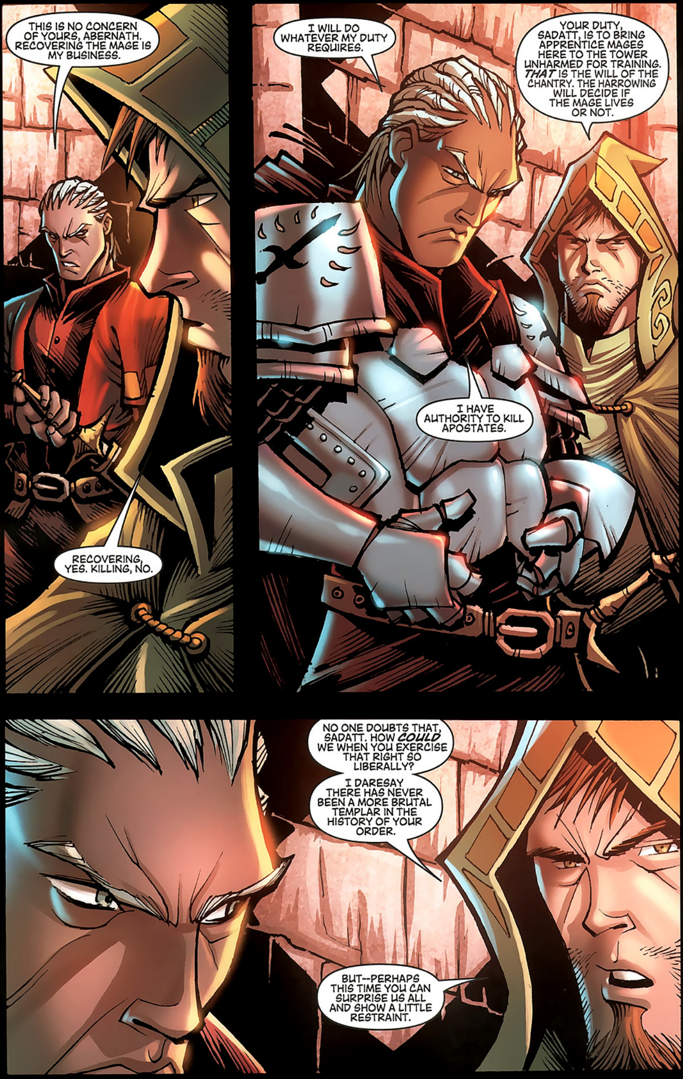

AGMO, HOLD HIM WHILE I CLEAN THE BLADE.
AHHHH!
STOP YOUR SQUIRMING. THIS MAGIC TAKES THE PAIN AWAY.
THERE. IT'S IN. NOW HOLD STILL WHILE I HEAL IT.
WHAT ABOUT MY GROIN? HE KICKED ME REALLY HARD DOWN THERE.
I'M NOT TOUCHING YOUR CROTCH. IF YOUR BERRIES ARE BRUISED, THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM.
HOW DO I LOOK?
AS UGLY AS EVER.

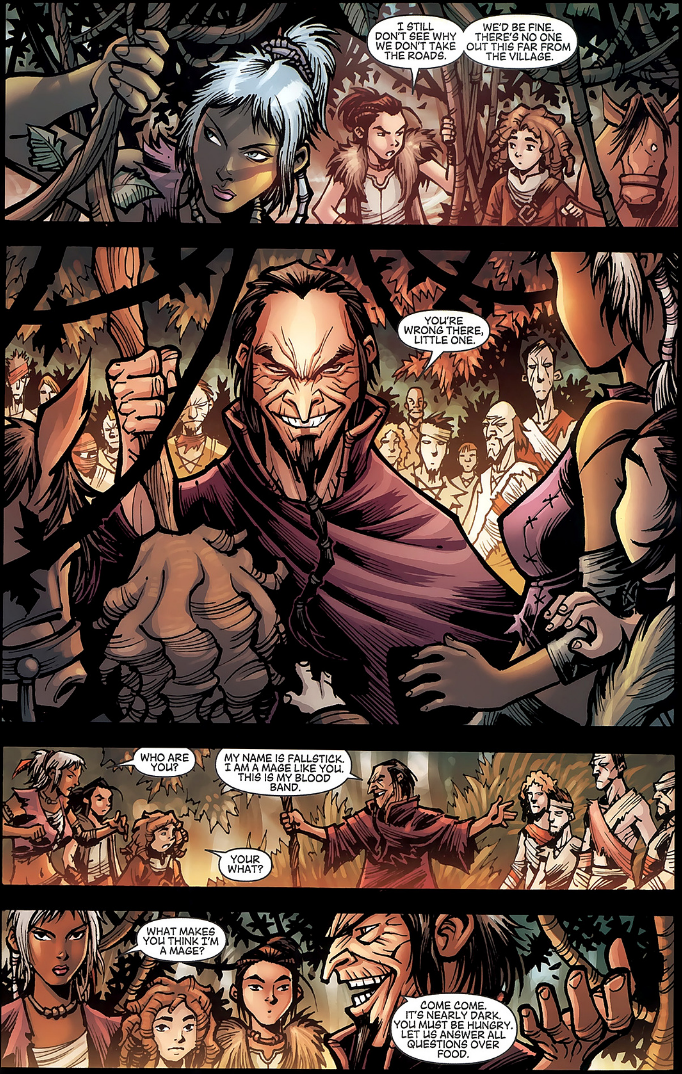

THE FAIR.
THE GIRL WAS A WITCH. TAKE THIS LETTER TO THE TEMPLARS AT THE CIRCLE TOWER. QUICK ABOUT IT.

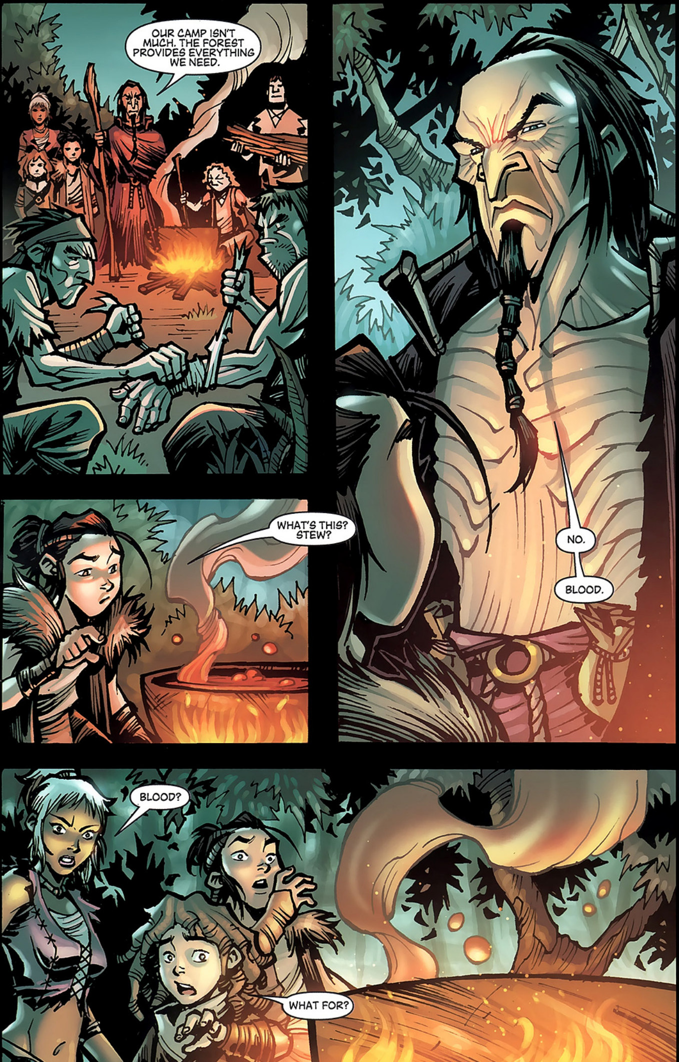

LAKE CALENHAD. THE CIRCLE TOWER.

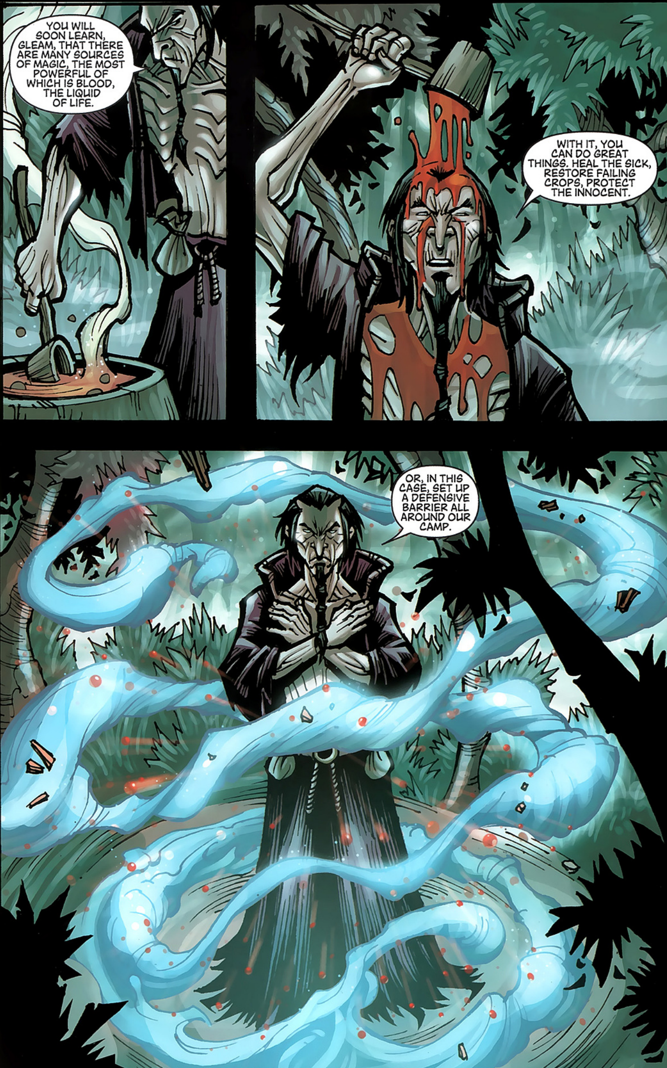

I HEAR RUMOR OF A LETTER, SADATT. WORD HAS IT THAT A NEW MAGE HAS BEEN SIGHTED IN THE SOUTH.
MY NAME IS NO LONGER SADATT, ABERNATH, AS YOU WELL KNOW. IT IS DUTY AND HAS BEEN FOR SEVENTEEN YEARS.
YOU WILL ALWAYS BE SADATT TO ME.
CHANGING YOUR NAME DOES NOT CHANGE WHO YOU ARE-- A MAN WHO KILLED THE WOMAN HE LOVED.

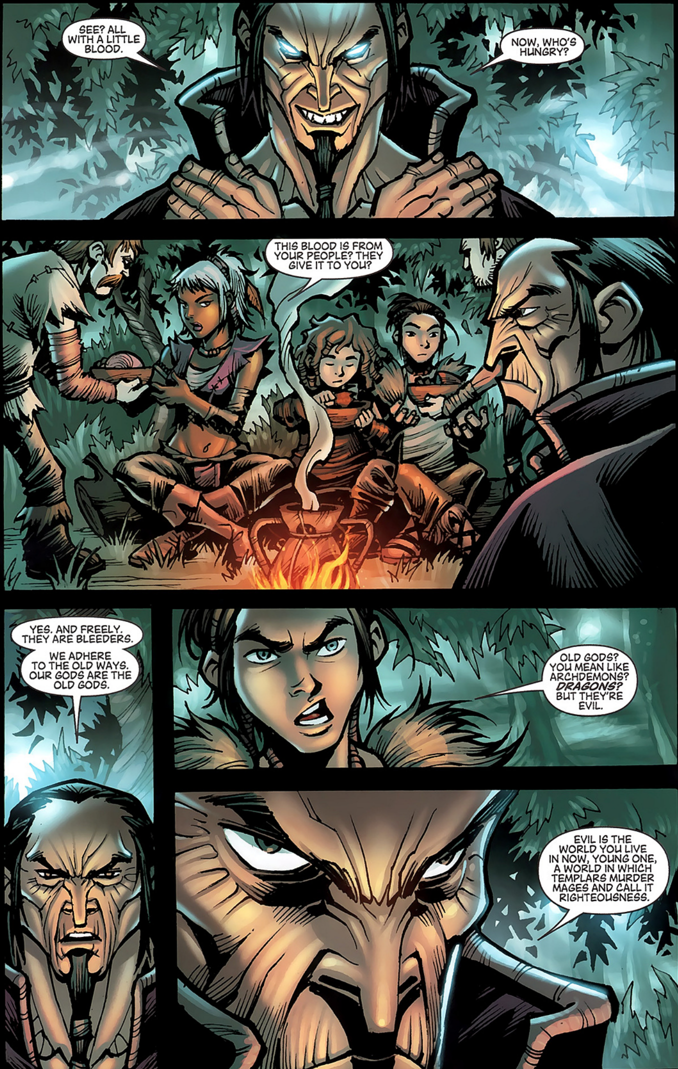

RAISE THAT SWORD AGAINST ME, TEMPLAR, AND IT WILL BE YOUR LAST ACT IN LIFE.

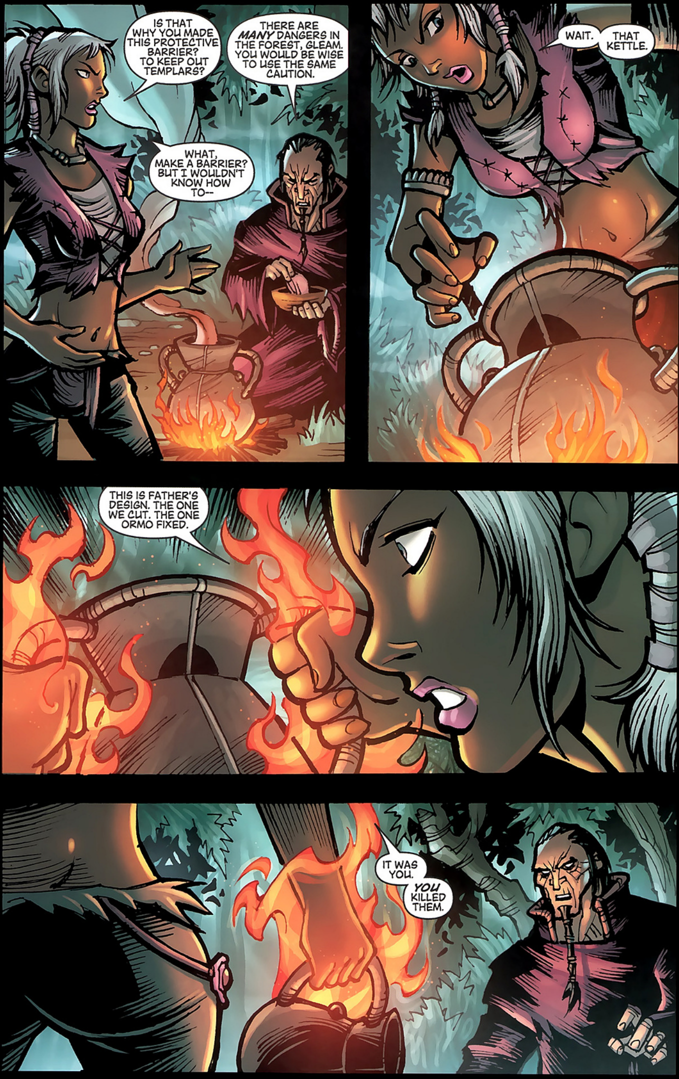

THIS IS NO CONCERN OF YOURS, ABERNATH. RECOVERING THE MAGE IS MY BUSINESS.
RECOVERING, YES. KILLING, NO.
I WILL DO WHATEVER MY DUTY REQUIRES.
YOUR DUTY, SADATT, IS TO BRING APPRENTICE MAGES HERE TO THE TOWER UNHARMED FOR TRAINING. *THAT* IS THE WILL OF THE CHANTRY. THE HARROWING WILL DECIDE IF THE MAGE LIVES OR NOT.
I HAVE AUTHORITY TO KILL APOSTATES.
NO ONE DOUBTS THAT, SADATT. HOW *COULD* WE WHEN YOU EXERCISE THAT RIGHT SO LIBERALLY?
I DARESAY THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A MORE BRUTAL TEMPLAR IN THE HISTORY OF YOUR ORDER.
BUT--PERHAPS THIS TIME YOU CAN SURPRISE US ALL AND SHOW A LITTLE RESTRAINT.

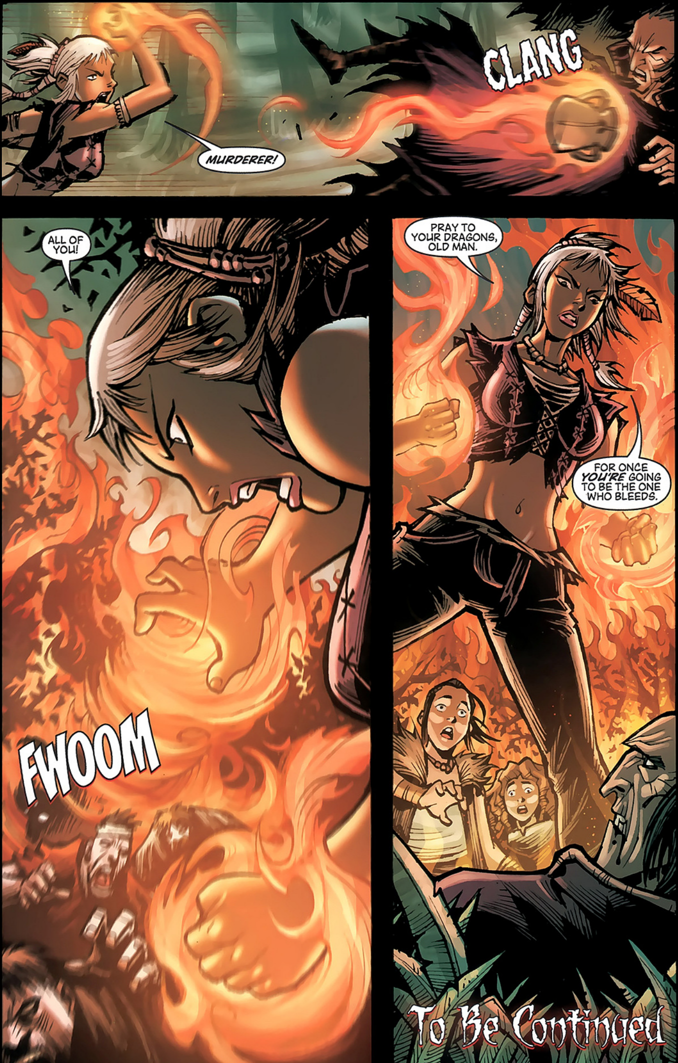

I STILL DON'T SEE WHY WE DON'T TAKE THE ROADS.
WE'D BE FINE. THERE'S NO ONE OUT THIS FAR FROM THE VILLAGE.
YOU'RE WRONG THERE, LITTLE ONE.
WHO ARE YOU?
MY NAME IS FALLSTICK. I AM A MAGE LIKE YOU. THIS IS MY BLOOD BAND.
YOUR WHAT?
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I'M A MAGE?
COME COME. IT'S NEARLY DARK. YOU MUST BE HUNGRY. LET US ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS OVER FOOD.


OUR CAMP ISN'T MUCH. THE FOREST PROVIDES EVERYTHING WE NEED.
WHAT'S THIS? STEW?
NO.
BLOOD.
BLOOD?
WHAT FOR?


YOU WILL SOON LEARN, GLEAM, THAT THERE ARE MANY SOURCES OF MAGIC, THE MOST POWERFUL OF WHICH IS BLOOD, THE LIQUID OF LIFE.
WITH IT, YOU CAN DO GREAT THINGS. HEAL THE SICK, RESTORE FAILING CROPS, PROTECT THE INNOCENT.
OR, IN THIS CASE, SET UP A DEFENSIVE BARRIER ALL AROUND OUR CAMP.


SEE? ALL WITH A LITTLE BLOOD.
NOW, WHO'S HUNGRY?
THIS BLOOD IS FROM YOUR PEOPLE? THEY GIVE IT TO YOU?
YES. AND FREELY. THEY ARE BLEEDERS.
WE ADHERE TO THE OLD WAYS. OUR GODS ARE THE OLD GODS.
OLD GODS? YOU MEAN LIKE ARCHDEMONS? DRAGONS? BUT THEY'RE EVIL.
EVIL IS THE WORLD YOU LIVE IN NOW, YOUNG ONE, A WORLD IN WHICH TEMPLARS MURDER MAGES AND CALL IT RIGHTEOUSNESS.


IS THAT WHY YOU MADE THIS PROTECTIVE BARRIER? TO KEEP OUT TEMPLARS?
THERE ARE *MANY* DANGERS IN THE FOREST, GLEAM. YOU WOULD BE WISE TO USE THE SAME CAUTION.
WHAT, MAKE A BARRIER? BUT I WOULDN'T KNOW HOW TO--
WAIT.
THAT KETTLE.
THIS IS FATHER'S DESIGN. THE ONE WE CUT. THE ONE ORMO FIXED.
IT WAS YOU.
YOU KILLED THEM.


MURDERER!
CLANG
ALL OF YOU!
FWOOM
PRAY TO YOUR DRAGONS, OLD MAN.
FOR ONCE *YOU'RE* GOING TO BE THE ONE WHO BLEEDS.
To Be Continued

MIGHT VS MAGIC
in the next issue of:
DRAGON AGE™
delgado

IDWORDS

News from the nerve center of IDW Publishing

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS RESURRECTED IN COMIC FORM

Genre-defining roleplaying game comes to life beginning with #0 issue in August

In conjunction with **Wizards of the Coast** and **Hasbro**, **IDW Publishing** will bring the first-ever ***Dungeons & Dragons #0*** to comic stores in August. The 24-page, specially priced comic introduces readers to the heroes and worlds of the upcoming *Dungeons & Dragons* ongoing series and *Dark Sun* miniseries. To learn more about the line, IDWords was able to catch up with editor **Denton J. Tipton** for a quick roll of the dice.

IDWords: *Dungeons & Dragons* has been around in one form or another for more than 35 years. Where do you start?

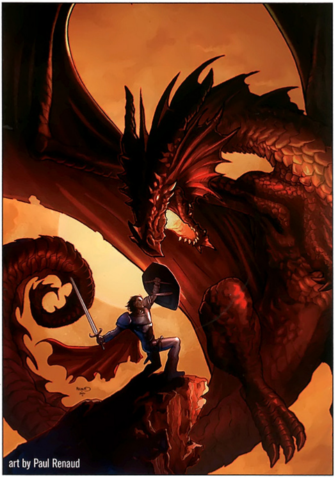
Tipton: That was the big question. The options are virtually limitless with the numerous settings and combinations that D&D offers. But we wanted our comics to be two things above all else: accessible and fresh. To that end, the *Dungeons & Dragons* series makes its home in the "core" world described in the current game manuals. The Fallcrest described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* is the same as in the pages of our comics, and the same as in upcoming novels by **Bill Slavicsek** and **Alex Irvine**. But everything starts in *Dungeons & Dragons #0*.

IDWords: Right, the one-dollar introductory issue. Tell us what that entails.

Tipton: We've jammed as much as could go into these 24 pages. First, we'll have a 10-page story that introduces our cast for the *Dungeons & Dragons* series, which debuts in November. Then a six-page story sets in motion the events of our *Dark Sun* miniseries, launching January 2011. The rest of the *#0* issue is filled with backup material that gives you a behind-the-scenes view of how these series came together, as well as content that can be plugged right into your D&D campaign at home. This will be a regular feature of our comics, as we want them to be the best value for your hard-earned dollar. But our biggest investment was made in the creative teams.

IDWords: And who might they be?

Tipton: They might be the single-biggest factor in the success of these books. We have assembled two fantastic creative teams for our opening salvo. **John Rogers** has signed on as writer of the *D&D* ongoing series. John's a talented creator who has made his mark across multiple media, in Hollywood for writing the first draft of the blockbuster *Transformers* movie for **Paramount**, on the small screen for creating and producing *Leverage* for **TNT**, and in comics for co-creating the new *Blue Beetle* for **DC Comics**. His stories are fresh, fun, and capture the feeling of the most enjoyable D&D session you can imagine.



art by Paul Renaud

And bringing that to life on the page is artist **Andrea Di Vito**. In the Italian maestro, we've landed a big-time talent who flexed his artistic muscle on *Thor* and *Annihilation* for **Marvel Comics**. He's longed for a break from the spandex set, and his enthusiasm shows in every line he makes. Andrea was born to draw this book.

IDWords: And the team for *Dark Sun*?

Tipton: You recall that **Alex Irvine** fellow I mentioned earlier? Well, the award-winning novelist will pen our *Dark Sun* miniseries. Not only did Alex earn the Locus Award for Best First Novel, joining the likes of **Carl Sagan**, **Cory Doctorow**, and **Joe Hill**, but he's also well versed in comics, having written several for Marvel. He recently gained our notice with his manuscript for his novel *Transformers: Exodus*, where his character-driven scenes really shined. And if he can do that with robots, we knew he'd kill doing a gritty *Dark Sun* tale.

Illustrating the five-issue series is Swede **Peter Bergting**, whose graphic novel, *The Portent*, became an international sensation, published in seven languages and lauded by the likes of **Mike Mignola** and **Michael Wm. Kaluta**. He sat atop our short list for this book, and we were lucky enough to get him.

IDWords: With a perfect jumping-on point and terrific creators, what more could you want from *Dungeons & Dragons* comics?

Tipton: How about deluxe editions of past material that has never been reprinted? The omnibus treatment for popular adaptations? Something original set in the fan-favorite setting, *Forgotten Realms*? Trust me, the excitement is just getting started.